

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

Please amend the Claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A pine cone collecting and holding tool comprising in combination:

an elongate tubular body defining a medial channel and having an upper end portion opening to said medial channel and a lower end portion opening to said medial channel and defining first fastening means and;

an entry structure having an annular peripheral rim defining an orifice geometrically similar to and larger than the lower end portion of the tubular body to fit over the lower portion of the tubular body, said peripheral rim~~[7]~~:

defining second fastening means to releasably interconnect with the first fastening means of the body for positional maintenance of the peripheral rim on the body, and

~~[a]~~ at least two ~~[of]~~ resiliently deformable triangular-like fingers spacedly carried about the inner surface of the rim in a coplanar relationship to extend radially inwardly spacedly distant from each other to define an orifice between the fingers

to allow passage of a pine cone[~~s~~] therethrough upon deformation of at least one of said at least two fingers responsive to force exerted upon the at least one of the at least two [~~of said~~] fingers by the pine cone[~~s~~].

2. (Original) The tool of Claim 1 wherein the body and the peripheral rim have circularly cylindrical configurations.

3. (Currently Amended) The tool of Claim 1 further having at least one manipulating handle extending radially outwardly from structural interconnection with the body spacedly [~~inwardly~~] downwardly from the upper end portion thereof.

4. (Currently Amended) The tool of Claim 3 further characterized by the at least one manipulating handle having a U-shaped body with similar opposed parallel legs extending perpendicularly from each end thereof, said legs carrying perpendicularly extending fastening brackets having means for fastening to the [~~tool~~] body.

5. (Original) The tool of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of fingers of the entry structure are coplanar.

6. (Currently Amended) The tool of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the plurality of fingers is angulated in a radially inward direction toward the ~~[tool]~~ body and at an angle of not more than about twenty degrees to a plane parallel to the peripheral rim.

7. (Currently Amended) The tool of Claim 1 wherein each of the fingers defines a medial radially extending slot terminating in ~~[its]~~ a radially outer portion in a bulbous enlargement to allow ~~[the]~~ a radially inner portion~~[s]~~ of each finger to move substantially independently of each other.

8. (Original) The tool of Claim 1 formed of one of the plastics of the group containing polyethylene, polyurethane and polypropylene.

9. (Original) The tool of Claim 1 wherein the first fastening means carried by the lower end portion of the body comprise external threads and the second fastening means

carried by the inner surface of the rim of the entry structure comprises internal threads that matingly enmesh to releasably interconnect the body and the entry structure.

10. **(Original)** The tool of Claim 1 wherein the diameter of the medial channel of the body is approximately two to twelve inches and the axial length of the body is approximately twenty-four to forty-eight inches.

11. **(Currently Amended)** A pine cone collecting and holding tool comprising in combination:

an elongately circularly cylindrical tubular body having a medial channel, an axial length of between twenty-four and forty-eight inches and a diameter of between four and ten inches, said body

having an upper end portion opening to the medial channel and a lower end portion defining first fastening means about an orifice opening to the medial channel;

at least two U-shaped manipulating handles carried in diametrically opposed positions on the body spacedly downwardly from the upper end portion; and

entry structure at the lower end portion of the body having

an annular peripheral rim with an internal diameter larger than the external diameter of the lower portion of the body to fit thereover, said annular rim defining second fastening means on ~~[its]~~ an inner surface to matingly fasten with the first fastening means defined in the lower portion of the body,

a plurality of circumferentially spaced triangular-like fingers carried by the peripheral rim in a coplanar relationship to extend radially inwardly to a position spacedly distant from the inner portions of each other finger, each of said fingers formed of resiliently deformable material having retentent memory and defining a medial slot extending radially outwardly from ~~[the]~~ an inner end portion[s] of ~~[the]~~ each finger[s] to terminate in a bulbous enlargement to allow ~~[the]~~ radially inner end portions of each finger to move relative to each other.